

Confessions - Book Xii - Chapter Xii

by St. Augustine

Transcript

15. These things I have considered as thou hast given me ability, O my God, as thou hast excited me to knock, and as thou hast opened to me when I knock. Two things I find which thou hast made, not within intervals of time, although neither is coeternal with thee. One of them is so formed that, without any wavering in its contemplation, without any interval of change--mutable but not changed--it may fully enjoy thy eternity and immutability. The other is so formless that it could not change from one form to another (either of motion or of rest), and so time has no hold upon it. But thou didst not leave this formless, for, before any \"day\" in the beginning, thou didst create heaven and earth--these are the two things of which I spoke.

But \"the earth was invisible and unformed, and darkness was over the abyss.\" By these words its formlessness is indicated to us--so that by degrees they may be led forward who cannot wholly conceive of the privation of all form without arriving at nothing. From this formlessness a second heaven might be created and a second earth--visible and well formed, with the ordered beauty of the waters, and whatever else is recorded as created (though not without days) in the formation of this world. And all this because such things are so ordered that in them the changes of time may take place through the ordered processes of motion and form.

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